

**MARK**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Mark chapter 14 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we begin this evening keep in mind that this chapter here in Mark is the longest chapter in this Gospel, some 72 verses. But, keep in mind that chapters and verses were added at a much later date. This was done to make it easier to find your way through the Scriptures instead of one long book.

And, as we will see, this chapter is packed with events that occurred, from the plot to kill Jesus by the Jewish religious leaders, to the anointing of Jesus by Mary, to the night of the last supper, the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and His appearance before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin.

So we have a lot of ground to cover and we are going to just dig into this chapter. Let's begin reading in Mark chapter 14, starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

**MARK 14****VERSES 1-2**

Mark opens up by telling us that the Passover was two days away. Passover began on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan on the Jewish calendar and then, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and running for seven days was the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Keep in mind, as we looked at in our study of Matthew, that the Passover would be on Thursday, not the traditional day of Friday, for those in Judea including the Sadducees. And, for the Galileans, they celebrated it on Wednesday along with the Pharisees. So Jesus and His men, who were Galileans, would have celebrated Passover on Wednesday and that is the meal that they will be preparing as we will see.

Now the popularity of Jesus has grown and Jerusalem is filled with people for the Feast of Passover and this put the Jewish religious leaders in a dilemma. They wanted Jesus dead but they realized the people would revolt so, to not cause any problems with the people, they would put Him to death after the Feast of Passover.

That was their plan but God had another plan and He was in control. Jesus would be crucified on Passover because He is the Lamb of God who would be sacrificed for the sins of the world!

### VERSE 3

We are told in John chapter 12 that this took place six days before the Passover, so this took place on the Friday before Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

Jesus is at Simon the ex-leper's house, for Jesus healed this man sometime during His ministry, possibly the leper spoken of in Mark 1:44-45, we aren't sure. And here we see Jesus, Mary, Martha and Lazarus gathered at Simon's house for a meal.

Also, John tells us it was Mary, the sister of Martha who broke this alabaster flask of costly perfume and poured it over Jesus, wiping His feet with her hair.

Keep in mind that this spikenard, this costly perfume may have been Mary's dowry which she would have presented to her husband at the time of her marriage. If that is the case then what Mary was doing was giving up everything, even marriage to devote herself completely to the Lord.

In saying that, what a beautiful picture of worship we see here. The love that Mary had for her Lord. She worshiped the Lord from her heart giving that which cost her something and before she could give she had to break the flask or be broken, humble, and in the end her life took on the fragrance of Jesus!

What do I mean by that? Simply, John tells us that Mary wiped the feet of Jesus with her hair, which was covered in this perfume and thus, the fragrance of Jesus was upon Mary. May we be so close to Jesus that His fragrance emanates from our lives as well!

#### VERSES 4-9

Picture this moving scene as Mary is pouring this oil on Jesus and then wiping His feet with her hair and what are the disciples of Jesus doing? They are complaining about wasting this money on Jesus! I know, that doesn't sound good, but that is what they were doing.

They felt this could have been sold and the money given to the poor, but that was not really what one of the disciples was thinking. Yes, all the disciples jumped in and felt this way but Judas had another motive. You see, he was interested in the money because he controlled the money bag!

Have you ever felt, as you were serving the Lord, worshiping Him through your actions, that people were coming against you? I am sure you have but look at what happens here as the disciples turn against Mary, Jesus steps in and stands up for her saying she has done a “**good**” or a “**beautiful**” thing.

Barclay points out, “In the Greek there are two words for *good*. There is *agathos* which describes a thing which is morally good; and there is *kalos* which describes a thing which is not only good but *lovely*. A thing might be *agathos*, and yet be hard, stern, austere, unattractive. But a thing which is *kalos* is winsome and lovely, with a certain bloom of charm upon it.”

Secondly, Jesus is not being insensitive to the poor but He is saying that we need to put Him first and everything else will fall into place.

Thirdly, there are a lot of people who talk about what they are going to do for the Lord but there is no action. But Mary stepped forward and put her words into action.

The fourth point is that Mary anointed Jesus’ body for burial. How did she know? Maybe she believed what He was saying while the disciples didn’t! And now her act of worship is left as a testimony of what true worship is all about!

Think about it, we are still reading what Mary did and studying what Mary did and it is just as Jesus said, “**Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.**” Mark 14:9.

VERSES 10-11

Notice what we see here, the contrast between Mary and Judas. We saw the brightness of Mary's worship of Jesus placed against the blackness of Judas' worship or should I say betrayal of Jesus!

One was ugly and rejected, left as a memorial for all to see this evil. The other is beautiful and accepted, and it too was left as a memorial to show us what true worship is all about. You see, Jesus does bring out the best and worst in people, things that are already in their hearts. He exposes what is in a person's heart for us and for everyone else to see!

And I think for Judas, this was the final straw, enough was enough and what Mary did brought him to the point where he could not take it any longer, he had enough of this.

Thus, he goes to the Jewish religious leaders to turn Jesus in, to betray Him! Think about what has transpired here. Mary was willing to give to the Lord all that she had in worship while Judas was willing to sell all that he could have to betray Jesus. I am not talking about monetary gain for Judas but heaven; he sold his soul to the Devil!

VERSES 12-16

So as they are preparing for this Passover meal Jesus tells His men to look for a man carrying a pitcher. That was very unusual. You see, women carried liquids in pitchers while the men carried liquids in animal skins. Thus, this would have been a sign to the disciples who this person was, it would have been easy to pick him out of a crowd! And in Luke 22:8 we are told that the two disciples who went out to prepare this meal were Peter and John.

Now this house where they were going to gather for this Passover meal, many commentators feel that this was John Mark's father's house, for John Mark was only about 12 years old at this time.

That means his father would have been the one carrying the pitcher. We are told in Acts 12:12, **“So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.”** So the early church gathered at his house and it is possible this is where the Passover meal was eaten!

Now keep in mind that it did take some time to prepare this meal. There was the roasted lamb which speaks of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The unleavened bread speaks of our sin being removed by the blood of the lamb. The salt water represented the tears they shed in Egypt but now they are dried up as the joy of the Lord has filled our lives. The bitter herbs represented the suffering they endured in Egypt but now we can cast all our cares upon Him. The mixture of dates, apples and pomegranates mixed with wine reminded them of the hard bondage they endured in Egypt, but now in Christ His burdens are light. Then there were the 4 cups of wine. That is what Peter and John had to prepare for this meal.

#### VERSES 17-21

As Jesus gathers with His men to partake of the Passover meal, He tells them that one of His men is going to betray Him. In fact, that has already been put into motion by Judas. Here is the amazing thing to me, none of them knew that it was Judas who would betray the Lord.

In Luke 22:23 we are told of what transpired in a little more detail than what Matthew and Mark tell us. Matthew says that these disciples said, “**Lord, is it I?**” Mark tells us, “**Is it I?**” But Luke tells us, “**Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.**”

They are arguing, maybe pointing the finger at each other and yet no one knew it was Judas except the Lord. That is how good he was at deceiving them because Judas was never a believer, he was a deceiver! And that is how much Jesus loved Judas and kept trying to draw Judas to Himself. He loved all equally!

And John tells us that as Judas ate the bread that Satan entered him, and as Judas left, it was night. The darkness not only filled the sky, but his heart also. (John 13) And at this point, the disciples still aren't sure, they thought Judas went out to buy some things for the feast!

And please understand the significance of this word that Jesus used for “**betray.**” It is the Greek word, PARADIDOMI, (par-ad-id'-o-mee) and it literally means to give over as in giving a prisoner over to the prison guard to place him in prison to punish him. Jesus is saying that one of His twelve men would turn Him over to the authorities; He is going to be arrested by one of His friends! And that is exactly what happened!

And then Jesus says it would have been better if Judas was never born. Why? Because of the choices he made he will spend eternity apart from God. Yes, God knew what Judas would do but it did not negate his responsibility, he was responsible for his actions just as we are. Also, you can look like a Christian, but that doesn't mean you are saved. Look at Judas. It is a matter of the heart!

VERSES 22-25

Here Jesus institutes communion. The bread represented His body. The wine, the third cup or the cup of blessing, represented His blood which was shed for us, the New Covenant. No longer the blood of bulls and goats, but His shed blood for us.

Now it is interesting how tradition comes into play here. Many don't know how these cups of wine came into play during the Passover meal. Jews for Jesus tells us,

Yet, how the cup became a Passover symbol remains a mystery. We do know that by the time Jesus observed the Passover, drinking a cup during the meal was an official part of the observance. In fact, an ancient rabbinic source, the Mishnah, instructs those celebrating to drink from the cup four times during the Passover seder (Pesahim 10:1). That tradition remains to this day.

Each time the cup is filled, it has a different name. Opinions vary as to what certain cups actually symbolize. Most agree that the first cup is the *Kiddush*, which means sanctification. With this cup, we begin the Passover seder. The second cup is called the cup of plagues. The third cup is referred to as either the cup of redemption or the cup of blessing. The fourth cup is often called *hallel* which means praise, though some traditions call it the cup of acceptance while still others use it as the cup of Elijah. The latter combine the second cup (plagues) with Hallel - because we praise God for the plagues He used to bring us out of Egypt.

Jewish tradition says little else about the cups - though we're told they should be filled with red wine to remind us of the blood of the Passover lamb.

- <http://jewsforjesus.org/publications/newsletter/march-2002/mystery>



I like what Paul said in I Corinthians 10:16, **“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?”** It is a rhetorical question, of course it is!

Now this New Covenant that Jesus is establishing, is not really new in the sense of a new idea. It is spoken of in the Old Testament. For instance, in Jeremiah 31:31-34 we are told, **“Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah - not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”**

And this is important for us to understand. The word Jesus used for **“covenant”** is not SYNTHEKE, which speaks of a deal or arrangement or contract made by two people, each playing an equal part in this contract.

He used the Greek word DIATHEKE which is a deal or arrangement or contract based upon one party, and here it speaks of God. You see, this covenant is based upon the faithfulness of God and not man, which tells me you can’t do anything to gain or lose your salvation, it is a free gift of God, all you can do is receive it by faith!

VERSE 26

After this they would sing from the Hallel Psalms, Psalms 113-118, and drink from the fourth cup or the cup of joy, but Jesus did not as He said in verse 25 of Mark chapter 14. He said He will drink it with us during the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. I look forward to that day!

Now as they come out of the city, out the east gate they were singing Psalm 118, at least many feel that is the Psalm they were signing as they are heading through the Kidron Valley and up the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray.

VERSES 27-31

They just shared this great meal, and yes, someone was going to betray Jesus, that is what they were told, but they have sung some hymns and then, out of the blue, Jesus says that all of them were going to stumble, they will deny Him!

And the Greek word for “**stumble**” is SKANDALIZO, (skan-dal-id’-zo) and it literally means to set a trap or a stumbling block. In other words, Jesus is telling His men that they would encounter a stumbling block or obstacle that is going to make them stumble and fall away from following Him, their loyalty to Him. That is a heavy statement and again, it is to all His men and He is that obstacle!

And then, after those words Jesus tells His men, “I’ll be back!” I don’t think they truly understood or believed He was going somewhere, that He was going to be crucified by the religious leaders. Thus, these words did not encourage them.

How do I know that? Because Peter just jumps in and says that he is not going to deny the Lord. “Yes, maybe these losers will deny you Lord, but not me. I am Peter, the **ROCK!**”

May we heed the words of Paul who said, “**Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.**” I Corinthians 10:12.

Make no mistake about it, I believe Peter meant this with all of his heart, he loved the Lord. The problem was he refused to accept what the Lord was saying and as we all know, you can't stand in the power of your flesh, nor could Peter!

We must be careful and remember where we tend to feel we are the strongest is where we are truly weak. And the reason being, we are not prepared and we let our guard down and we fall!

And for Peter, Jesus has to repeat Himself and tell Peter that before the rooster crows twice, he will deny Him! And Peter still refused to listen and he tells Jesus that there is no way that is going to happen, he will never deny his Lord. And the other disciples joined in and said basically the same thing, they too were not going to deny Him!

#### VERSES 32-36

So with the cross before Him, the agony, the pain, the separation from the Father, Jesus goes to His therapist for help! No, He goes to pray! Why not come before the God of all comfort and receive from Him just what you will need. Jesus did and what an example to us. When you are faced with difficult things in your life, the answer is prayer!

The place that Jesus goes to pray is called “*Gethsemane*” which means olive press and I find that interesting. You see, not only was Jesus going to be crushed for our sins, but in this garden we see the forces of darkness trying to crush Him, for Him to fail in His mission. This is the greatest spiritual battle ever fought and how was it won? By Jesus being on His knees in prayer. Again, a powerful lesson for us to understand and apply to our lives!

As they travel to His prayer spot, He takes Peter, James and John with Him, this inner circle of three. Now in this time of great anguish, who does Jesus have with Him? His friends. Another great lesson for us, to have those we can confide in close by in those difficult times so they can pray for us, encourage us in the battle we are in.

And as you read this you can see the anguish in Jesus as He just falls to the ground and starts to pray, He wants that cup of judgment, the wrath of God to pass from Him. In this we see His human side.

But, He goes on to say that He wants not His will but the Father's will to be done! It is not always easy but it is what is best for us to go where He leads! And as we are in anguish over something, God will do for us as He did for Jesus as "**... an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.**" Luke 22:43.

Of this Ironside made these comments, "His holy soul shrank from the awfulness of being made sin upon the tree. It was not death, but the divine anger against sin, the imputation to Him of all our iniquities that filled His soul with horror. There was no conflict of wills."

One more point here before we move on and that deals with this idea that there are many ways to God, many roads to God and you just have to travel on one of them and you will get to heaven.

That is not what we see here. Jesus prayed that if there were any other way to save mankind from his sin, then let's do it. But there is no other way to heaven except through Christ. He had to go to the cross and pay in full the penalty for our sins, it was the only way and thus, He is the only way as He said in John 14:6, "**... I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**" Very clear, I don't think there is any confusion with that statement. All you can do is accept it or reject it, but the choice is yours!

VERSES 37-38

As Jesus returns He finds the boys sleeping, including Peter. And Jesus calls Peter by his old name, Simon or shifting sand! The flesh that Peter was so proud of was weak and He was going to have to learn to submit to the power of God's Spirit instead of working in the power of the flesh, which is like shifting sand! They all wanted to stay awake, but a big meal and a long day and they were exhausted and as they sat down, they fell asleep.

And Jesus said, "**. . . The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.**" Mark 14:38. And I think the lesson for us is that we need to keep our eyes upon Jesus and not be so consumed with this world or trying to accomplish in the flesh what can only be accomplished in the Spirit. You see, when we take our eyes off the Lord we fail so often and Peter is going to find that out big time as He will deny the Lord three times just as the Lord warned Him he would do!

VERSES 39-42

Jesus goes away and prays for a second and third time and as Jesus returns each time His men are still sleeping. Anytime you want to do something for the Lord, step out in faith, understand that the enemy will bring great opposition towards what you are doing.

The weakness of the flesh will be seen and you might say "I'm too tired!" or "I don't have any time!" or whatever. The solution to that is bring it to God in prayer and step out in faith! He will strengthen you for the work He has called you to do.

Also, what I want you to notice is that Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane in agony and He left in peace! How can that be? Because He submitted to the will of the Father and I believe that is true in our own lives.

As we try to get our own will accomplished there is no peace, just frustration, agony, and-so-on. But surrendering to the will of God in a given situation places the problem, the situation at His feet and thus, you can rest in Him! What an example for us to follow!

For Jesus, this issue is settled, no more anguish for Jesus for as He prayed the Father comforted Him. He was going to the cross, the matter is settled.

And as Jesus returns this third time, as I have said, they are still sleeping and He could have been watching and praying over them for an hour before He awakens them. For as He is watching some 800 to 1,000 people are coming towards Him to arrest Him. Judas the betrayer is coming! Jesus was at peace with this because He was not fighting against the will of God - what a great lesson for us!

And listen again to what Jesus says, **“Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”** Mark 14:42. Let’s read on and see what happens next.

#### VERSES 43-52

As Jesus finished speaking to His men we see Judas and this cohort of men, some 600 armed men plus the chief priests’ soldiers, the Sanhedrin and the High Priest and his men, which means there could have been, like I have said, some 800 to 1,000 men or more coming for Jesus, for one man in the middle of the night and they were armed to the teeth! And as they traveled many had with them lanterns and He saw this trail of light coming up the Mount of Olives, to the Garden of Gethsemane! He knew what was going to happen.

And the plan of Judas was to go and kiss Jesus and that would identify Him to the soldiers that He was the one to arrest. That means Jesus must have looked like your average Joe you might say. He did not have a glow over his head.

And when Judas comes up to Jesus he doesn't call Jesus "**Lord**" because he refused to submit to the Lordship of Jesus, so Judas calls Him "**Rabbi**" or "**Teacher**". And many do the same today and will suffer the same fate as Judas, eternal separation from God.

Now you have to love the enthusiasm you might say of Peter. Not a good thing to do but he did try. Peter is the apostle that gets up and cuts the ear off of the servant of the High Priest Caiaphas, he cuts off the ear of Malchus!

With that strategy to defeat the enemy, he would have to cut off some 2,000 ears, and what good would that do? Jesus takes this ear and places it back on Malchus's head. You see, He had to fix what Peter did because Peter was not listening to the Lord.

How many ears has the Lord replaced for us because of our actions, because we refused to listen to what He is telling us to do? Listen to His voice and do as He leads, not as you feel!

You would think that Jesus putting this guy's ear back on would have awakened these Jewish religious leaders from their spiritual sleep, but it did not. They were on a mission to not only arrest Jesus but to see Him put to death and it didn't matter if He raised the dead or even just put an ear back on that was cut off!

And Jesus rebukes them telling them that they could have taken Him easily as He taught in the Temple but they wanted Him isolated, with as little of followers as possible so there would be no trouble. They thought they had a great plan when in reality, they were fulfilling Scripture!

Now remember what Jesus said back in Mark 14:27-31, “... ‘All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: “I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.” But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.’ But he spoke more vehemently, ‘If I have to die with You, I will not deny You.’ And they all said likewise.”

And look at what transpired here, “Then they all forsook Him and fled.” You would think that maybe one of them would have remained, maybe Peter, but none of them did just as the Lord said would happen!

In John 16:32 Jesus said, “Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.”

That is a great point that I think we truly need to understand. Make no mistake about it, people will fail us and I am sure they have just as we have failed others. And sometimes you feel all alone, that there is no one standing with you and you are wrong.

I realize that it may be difficult but the Lord is with you and that is the best person to have with you. In Hebrews 13:5-6 we are told, “For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”

I think we understand that but do we truly believe it when all have forsaken us? It is so important that we do because it is in Jesus we find comfort, hope, peace, strength, stability and much, much more!



Now we do have to deal with verses 51 and 52 of Mark chapter 14, which says, **“Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body. And the young men laid hold of him, and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.”**

Mark is the only one who speaks of this and it could be that Mark is speaking of himself, for he was only some 12 years old at this point. Remember the song “They call it the streak!”? Here it is, Mark is running home some 1½ miles in the buff and I’m sure the soldiers had fun with that!

One writer put it like this in regards to who this person was,

Most scholars . . . believe that the young man was probably John Mark, the writer of this Gospel. They surmise that, as tradition suggest, the Passover meal had been eaten in the upper room of his family home, which became a prominent gathering-place for Jesus’ followers (Acts 12:12). When Jesus and the Eleven went out to the Mount of Olives, Mark hastily dressed in only a linen garment. (Mark undoubtedly had been an eyewitness to Gethsemane. Hence the intimate details.) Poor Mark was almost grabbed by the mob, escaping au naturel in the night.

- R. Kent Huges, Mark Volume two, p. 177

I tend to lean in that direction, that this was Mark and since he wrote this Gospel, he included that.

VERSES 53-59

Now comes the trials of Jesus. First before Annas, the former High Priest and the power behind the office. And Mark does not record this, neither does Matthew, but in John 18:12-14 we see Jesus taken to Annas. And in John 18:13 we are told, **“And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year.”**

Then Jesus was taken to the High Priest Caiaphas, the one that Rome placed in this position. And also with Caiaphas were the chief priests, the elders and the whole council. Now they had a problem because before they could even bring Jesus before the secular courts, the Roman authorities, they had to have a reason and they didn't.

And finally Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin which was like our Supreme Court, made up of 70 people plus the High Priest, 71 in all. We will see this next time in Mark chapter 15.

Keep in mind what we see here in Mark is not the formal hearing before the Sanhedrin, that takes place in Mark 15:1, as I have said. This is before Caiaphas and with him were many of the big shots, many of the leaders who made up the Sanhedrin, as I have said and this meeting is taking place at night. The hearing before the Sanhedrin in Mark 15:1 was in the morning.

Keep in mind that this trial was illegal in many ways. First of all, it was held during the night. Secondly, they could not get their witnesses to agree what Jesus did wrong. And the Law said that you needed two witnesses to agree or the person was to be let go. Obviously, at this point, they didn't have that!

Now here is the amazing thing to me. They had no charges that they could place against Jesus so, according to Matthew 26:59, they **“sought false testimony”** to convict Him and they saw nothing wrong with this. I guess it was for a greater cause, at least in their mind.

And there were many who came forward to testify against Jesus, the only problem was that they gave false testimony and they could not even agree on what Jesus did that was wrong, that was deserving of death!

Then there were two men who said that Jesus claimed that He was going to destroy this Temple, something He said some three years earlier, and that was a capital offense. They could have put Him to death for that.

But even this false statement couldn't be agreed upon by the false witnesses according to Mark 14:59. And Jesus was not talking about a building but His body, which would be destroyed and yet rise on the third day.

John 2:19-21 makes this very clear, **“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ Then the Jews said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body.”** Again, this was a false charge against Jesus but they were desperate to find anything to charge Him and sentence Him!

But just because they had no charges against Him, nothing that they could agree upon, it is not going to stop them to come up with something to charge Jesus with and bring Him before Pilate to be put to death!

#### VERSES 60-62

So all of those accusations against Jesus amounted to nothing and that made the High Priest mad. So mad that he gets up from his seat and you can just imagine his blood boiling as he tries to catch Jesus saying something so that he will be able to bring charges against Him.

Spurgeon put it like this, “It was a tacit [inferred] confession that Christ had been proved innocent up till then. The high priest would not have needed to draw something out of the accused one if there had been sufficient material against him elsewhere. The trial had been a dead failure up to that point, and he knew it, and was red with rage. Now he attempts to bully the prisoner that he may extract some declaration from him which may save all further trouble of witnesses, and end the matter.”

Now why didn't Jesus say anything? Because what these men spoke were lies and no one could substantiate their accusations. It is as Isaiah said some 700 years before Jesus was born, **“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”** Isaiah 53:7.

And then Caiaphas asked Him if He is the Christ and Jesus said **“I Am!”** Jesus uses the Name of God that was spoken out of the burning bush in Exodus chapter 3! The words of Jesus come out of Daniel 7:13-14 where we are told, **“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”** You see, they knew what Jesus was saying, they just did not want to believe what He was saying.

And if you are not sure that they understood that Jesus was saying that He is God, listen to what transpires next!

VERSES 63-65

When the High Priest, Caiaphas heard that he tore his clothes because he thought God's name was being dishonored. Now I think there was a lot of showmanship going on here. This was a big deal to see the High Priest do this. The problem was that in tearing his clothes he was breaking the Law of God. In Leviticus 21:10 we are told, "**He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes.**"

Make no mistake about it, they knew exactly what Jesus was saying, that He is God, there is no confusion about that even though the Jehovah Witnesses like to tell us there is. The reason they could put Him to death was because of blasphemy, He made Himself to be God, you just couldn't put a person to death for anything! And if Jesus was misunderstood, don't you think He would speak up? Of course He would!

Now that was the Jewish law and they had to come up with a charge against Him so Rome would put Him to death. In Luke 23:1-2 we see this played out as He is brought before Pilate and we are told, "**Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate. And they began to accuse Him, saying, 'We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.'**"

Now Pilate saw Jesus as innocent and as we will see next time, he let the crowds drive him to do that which he knew was wrong, crucify Jesus!

And verse 65 here in Mark 14 is very sad. We are told, "**Then some began to spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, 'Prophecy!' And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands.**"

Here we see the hatred of man towards God. They blindfold Jesus, they struck Him with their fists, with rods. Please understand that when a person can't see a punch coming they can't react to it and turn away from it lessening the blow. So Jesus received the full blow of those punches. In fact, it was so bad that Isaiah tells us some 700 years before this event, what the face of Jesus would look like after these beatings.

We read in Isaiah 52:14, **“Just as many were astonished at you, so His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.”**

The Living Bible puts it this way, **“Yet many shall be amazed when they see him - yes, even far-off foreign nations and their kings; they shall stand dumbfounded, speechless in his presence. For they shall see and understand what they had not been told before. They shall see my Servant beaten and bloodied, so disfigured one would scarcely know it was a person standing there. So shall he cleanse many nations.”**

If you have ever seen a boxer who has lost a match, their face is swollen, maybe their eyes swollen shut, and Jesus looked much worse. His face didn't even look like the face of a man anymore!

And for what reason? Jealousy by the religious leaders and these men got the crowds of people to side with them. And as you look at the life of Jesus He came to heal the brokenhearted, give sight to the blind, open the ears of the deaf, raise the dead and-so-on. And that was great, the people were with Him, not the religious leaders. But when things did not go the way they wanted, they turned against Jesus. That truly is man today, if things don't go the way they want they turn against God. May we be wise, God has what is best for us and we need to surrender to Him not turn against Him!

As we read on we are going to shift from what is taking place with Jesus to what is happening to Peter, which is occurring at the same time as Peter is in the courtyard of the High Priest.

### VERSES 66-72

Here we see Peter warming himself by the fire and this servant girl stared at Peter for a long time, she wasn't sure if he was the one who was with Jesus. And her question is phrased to get a negative response, "You aren't the one are you?"

Now that leaves the door wide open for Peter to say "No way! You got the wrong guy!" And that is exactly what he does. He probably rationalized in his mind that it would be better to say that at this time, so he did. That is a dangerous thing for Peter and for us for us to do, to deny the Lord!

And there are a few mistakes that Peter makes here that we can learn from. First of all, he is following the Lord at a distance. And next he is warming himself by the enemy's fire as John 18:18 tells us. When you follow Jesus at a distance it will cause you to live differently than when you are following close to Him. When you try to warm yourself by the enemy's fire, you will get burned!

So Peter, knowing that the fire was illuminating his face and he is being recognized, he now moves towards the porch, an area that was in the dark. He wanted to blend in with the crowd, he did not want to be seen.

But he is exposed once again as this other servant girl sees Peter and she is pretty sure Peter is the one who was with Jesus. And she is now getting others involved, pointing to Peter, “There he is, that is the one, he is a disciple of Jesus!” And again Peter denied this, but this time with an oath, “I swear to God I don’t know the man!” Peter was willing to die for the Lord and yet here he can’t even admit that he knows the Lord!

Now Luke tells us that about 1 hour passed and maybe Peter was feeling safe at this point. But then things get worse for John tells us that a relative of Malchus, the guy whose ear Peter cut off, recognized Peter, he was an eyewitness of the event, he saw the whole thing.

Not only that, but his Galilean accent gives him away! This time Peter denies the Lord with cursing and an oath. In other words, “I swear to God I don’t know this man and if I am lying, may God strike me dead!” Peter is now 3 for 3 and what do you think the next thing Peter heard?

Luke tells us that as the words of denial were coming off the lips of Peter the rooster crowed and it was then Peter realized he failed. In fact, in Luke 22:61-62 we are told, “**And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, ‘Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ So Peter went out and wept bitterly.**”

As the blindfold came off the face of Jesus the rooster crowed and the eyes of Jesus met the eyes of Peter and Peter was now broken of his self-rule, self-will. Jesus looked at Peter in love and compassion and it was too much for him to take, and he ran away weeping. And the Lord does restore Peter but he first needed to be broken before he could be used by God.

As I bring this study to a close, let me share with you a few things that lead to Peter’s failure so that we can learn from them and not have to go through them.



**A. PETER WAS SELF-CONFIDENT** – That is never a good thing to be. We are frail, our strength needs to come from the Lord.

**B. PETER WAS SLEEPING IN THE GARDEN WHEN HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN PRAYING** – There is nothing wrong with sleeping but we do need to pray. And we waste so much time during our day when we can pray, seek God’s direction and-so-on.

**C. PETER WAS WILLING TO FOLLOW JESUS AT A DISTANCE** – Long distant relationships don’t work and Peter found that out. You draw near to God and He will draw near to you!

**D. PETER TRIED TO FIT INTO THE WORLD BY PUTTING OUT HIS LIGHT AND WARMING HIMSELF BY THE ENEMIES FIRES** – It is hard to live in both worlds, even though we try to do it. But the enemy will recognize you and many times it is the enemy of God who will call you out and expose you! Don’t be conformed to this world, be transformed by Christ, renew your mind by being in His Word!

**E. PETER WAS LIVING A LIE BEFORE THEM. THEY WANTED THE TRUTH, AND HE GAVE THEM LIES. THAT IS HYPOCRISY** – The Devil is the father of lies and thus, may we live in truth.

And please understand this, God loves us so much that He is willing to let us come to the end of ourselves so that we would turn to Him and depend on Him, like He did with Peter. We all need to understand that.

It is as Paul said in Philippians 4:13, **“I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me.”** You see, you don’t have the strength to walk with God without His help. Look to Him to be the strength of your life. Look to the Rock that is higher than you!